

Foul Language

I. What's wrong with using foul language?

A. What does the Bible say is wrong language?

Ex 20:7 *You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.*

Eph 4:29 *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers.*

Eph 5:3 *But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. 4 Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. (See also Eph 5:12)*

- a. "Sexual immorality" - unlawful sexual intercourse (i.e. prostitution, unchastity, fornication)
- b. "Impurity" - impurity, dirt, refuse, immorality.
- c. "Obscenity" - shameful, foul-mouthed, disgraceful talk
- d. "Foolish talk" - stupid or silly talk
- e. "Coarse joking" - buffoonery

Col 3:5-8 *Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must rid yourselves of all things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.*

B. Does choice of words degrade good/serious things?

Romans 1:32 *Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things [i.e. sex outside of God's design] deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.*

Most foul language involves:

1. References to sexual ("private") parts of the body or sexual actions (usually in ways that demean these things).
2. References to what goes in or comes out of the body.
3. References to serious spiritual concepts which treats them as trivial. For example, God's name, Jesus' name, hell, damnation, sexuality.

C. What would Jesus do/say? What would please God?

Eph 5:1-2 *Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children, and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering & sacrifice to God.*

James 3:9-10 *With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be.*

I Cor 6:19 *Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you received from God?*

Eph 5:10 *... and find out what pleases the Lord.*

II. Why people swear or use foul language?

- A. Feeble attempt at adding emphasis/seriousness to what is said.
- B. To shock
- C. Habit
- D. Because others do, to be accepted
- E. Gives a false sense of being "grown up"
- F. Poverty of the vocabulary, lack of imagination
- G. Diarrhea of an empty heart

III. Alternative to cursing

- A. Matt 5:44 *But I tell you: Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you and pray for those who persecute you ...*
- B. Luke 6:28 *Bless those who curse you, pray for those who ill-treat you.*

IV. Oaths and Curses in the Bible

A. Oaths & swearing:

1. Definition:

"Oaths" - a solemn appeal to something to prove one is telling the truth or that one will keep a promise. The words used and form may differ from culture to culture.

"Swearing" - (as used in the Bible) "to make a solemn declaration". The Bible doesn't use the word in the sense of "cursing" or "foul language".

2. God making oaths

Isaiah 45:23 *By myself I have sworn, my mouth has uttered in all integrity a word that will not be revoked: Before me every knee will bow; by me every tongue will swear. (Jer 22:5, 44:26, 49:13)*

Hebrews 6:13 *When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no-one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself (see also Heb 6:16)*

3. Before Christ, invoking solemn oaths were permitted.

1 Kings 8:31 *When a man wrongs his neighbor and is required to take an oath and he comes and swears the oath before your altar in this temple (Gen 50:25, Jer 4:2, 12:16, Zech 5:4)*

Psalm 63:11 *But the king will rejoice in God; all who swear by God's name will praise him, while the mouths of liars will be silenced.*

4. After Christ, Christians should not to take oaths.

Matt 5:34 *But I tell you, Do not swear at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne; 35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. 36 And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black.*

James 5:12 *Above all, my brothers, do not swear- not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. Let your "Yes" be yes, and your "No", no, or you will be condemned.*

B. Curses

1. Definition: "Curse" - to bring punishment or penalty for disobedience upon an individual or group of offenders.

2. Jesus cursed a tree

Mark 11:21 *Peter remembered and said to Jesus, "Rabbi, look! The fig-tree you cursed has withered!"*

Represented God's judgment against nation of Israel.

3. Those going to hell are cursed by God

Matt 25:41 *Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'* [God's cursing bring eternal damnation]

Gal 3:10 *All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."*

4. Christ became a curse for us. Praise God!

Gal 3:13 *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree."* [In other words, Christ took the punishment for our sins]

V. Conclusion

A. What does the Bible specifically say about foul language?

B. Does choice of words cause us to degrade good/serious things?

C. What would Jesus do or say? What would please God?